

Shonts Letter Called Wife Blackmailer

(Continued from page one)

her blackmailing methods of trying to extort money from me have finished for me. There is a point beyond which one's self-respect will not let one travel in the way of forgiveness, even if repentance is shown (which has not happened here), and that point with her has long since been passed.

"So far as you two girls are concerned, I still love you tenderly and devotedly. It is my desire, fully as much as ever, to do for you as much as my circumstances will warrant. But hereafter I will expect something in return other than words. Hereafter I have sacrificed companionship, health, rest, books and everything which appeals to me in order to fill your girlhood years with every pleasure, and your later years with the sweetest memories of your youth. Now my advancing years require a change. While I do not want to commercialize love, I must require quid pro quo in deeds as well as words.

"Your mother can get a separation—a divorce—anything she wants. I can never respect her again. But you can come any time your heart prompts you and will be welcome. If we make a home here, it must be understood that it will be my home, and that every one in it will carry out my ideas and wishes willingly, cheerfully and loyally. Otherwise it will be better not to have one at all. Let me know promptly, my dear children, what your hearts and judgments decide.

Tells of Alleged Blackmail

"In conclusion, I can only say that the writing of this letter is one of the saddest undertakings of my life. I have always hoped you would learn your mother's peculiarities without my being forced to tell you, but her attempts to injure me this trip here have been too dastardly and have come to the knowledge of too many of my friends for me to ignore, inasmuch as there is no indication of any let-up on her part.

"I am compelled to tell, and I think it right for you to know, the truth. For very latest scheme, a thing she is now working on, is the preparation of a scurrilous article on me, which she intends sending to me through a stranger with the threat that if I don't pay \$75,000 it will be published in 'Town Topics.' Which would you rather believe—that your mother is insane or capable of this?

"Because of my great love for you two girls I have suffered neglect, misrepresentation and abuse for years in silence, but my powers of endurance are gone. I am entitled, after my years of self-sacrifice, to something else, and I am going to have it. I am entitled after all these years of wrangling to peace, and I am going to have it. Do you want to give me all the things I have longed for and starved for? If so, I ask too much, be honest and say so. I can stand anything if it is only honest, sincere and genuine. With all my heart, YOUR LOVING FATHER."

Says Mrs. Shonts Signed Paper

Mrs. Thomas in her answer says that once before Mrs. Shonts brought a similar suit against her, later discontinuing it and agreeing in writing never again to repeat the false charges made by her or otherwise molesting and annoying Mrs. Thomas. The defendant in the alienation action now pending also hark back to 1915, when Mrs. Shonts sued her husband for a separation, which was at the same time she sued Mrs. Thomas. In his answer to the separation action Mr. Shonts said that the extravagance of his wife had overwhelmed him in debt and that Mrs. Shonts failed to display any wife-like affections. To this Mrs. Thomas adds that another cause of the disagreement between Mr. Shonts and his wife was "her insistence upon living abroad in order to associate with titled personages, and her negotiation and promotion of the marriage of their daughter Theodora to an impetuous French nobleman of unsavory character and reputation."

The answer of Mr. Shonts to the 1915 separation suit further set forth that all his life he had been in the railroad business, with the exception of two years, when he was president of the Isthmian Canal Commission. Prior to 1909, he said, he and his family had lived in the West.

Disliked Wife's Social Aims

"During the defendant's business career," he said, "he has been obliged to work long hours each day and has needed the comforts of a home, where he might rest and recuperate and have the companionship of his wife and

daughters, but the defendant alleges that the plaintiff many years ago acquired social ambitions of a character not in keeping with the ideals of the defendant or of a plain citizen of the United States, or with the financial means of the parties hereto; that plaintiff became obsessed with the idea of the marriage of her daughters into the titled families of Europe; that defendant counseled against such course, but in spite of his protests the defendant's daughter, aided and abetted by the other members of the defendant's family, contracted the marriage aforesaid; that the defendant's position in relation to such foreign alliance always angered the plaintiff and was the principal cause of such differences as have actually arisen between the parties."

Met Shonts in 1906

Mr. Shonts said that after the marriage he opposed the continued residence in France of his family.

Mrs. Thomas says she met Mr. Shonts casually in October, 1906, for the first time. They were introduced by Miss Marcuette Shonts, now Mrs. Richard Bingham.

They did not meet again until February, 1908, which meeting was at the marriage of the Duchess de Chaulnes. Their acquaintance, Mrs. Thomas asserted, did not begin until two years after the acts of alienation, "fraudulently and maliciously" alleged by Mrs. Shonts. On June 20, 1917, the same day Mrs. Shonts entered into a separation agreement, Mrs. Thomas executed a general release forever discharging Mrs. Thomas from all causes of action, controversies, claims and demands in law or in equity which the plaintiff then might have had or would ever have against Mrs. Thomas by reason of any cause whatsoever. The Shontses never lived together after the signing of the separation agreement in 1917, whereas their actual marital relations had ceased prior to the writing of the foregoing letter in 1911.

Prohibition Ratification

In Michigan Held Final

LANSING, Mich., April 10.—Action of the Michigan Legislature in ratifying the national prohibition amendment is final and cannot be submitted to a referendum vote of the people, the State Supreme Court held today.

The decision upheld Secretary of State Vaughan in his refusal to submit the ratification to a referendum after a petition to that end had been filed by the Michigan Hotel Men's Association.

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(Signed) Percy Grainger.

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(Signed) Josef Hofmann

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(Signed) I. J. Paderewski.

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